

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11 INR-11

LAB-06 NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01 AID-20 DRC-01 DODE-00

PM-07 H-03 L-03 NSC-07 PA-04 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 /154 W

----- 123570

R 310628Z AUG 74

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 612

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

CDR USSAG NKP

CINCPAC

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, ELAB, LA

SUBJ: UPDATE OF LABOR SITUATION

REF: VIENTIANE 6593

1. POLICE - STRIKE OF THE VIENTIANE TRAFFIC POLICE, MENTIONED PARA 8 REFTTEL, ENDED AUGUST 25. THE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE STRIKERS AND THE POLICE DEPARTMENT PROVIDED INTER ALIA THAT THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF POLICE BE REPLACED AND THAT TIAO SIHARATH PHASOUK, A POLICE GENERAL AND MEMBER OF THE JOINT NATIONAL POLITICAL COUNCIL, BE CHARGED WITH CARRYING OUT OTHER PROVISIONS. THE AGREEMENT DID NOT MENTION PAY RAISES AND WAS CONCERNED MAINLY WITH THE CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT IN THE POLICE.

2. PTT - THE MAJOR STRIKE IMMEDIATELY ON THE HORIZON IS THAT
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OF THE MINISTRY OF POSTS, TELEPHONE AND TELEGRAPH (PTT). AGAIN

THE MAJOR DEMAND IS AD HOMINEM, IN THIS CASE THE REMOVAL OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE MINISTRY, KHAMLEUANG SAYARATH. THE EMPLOYEES ACCUSE KHAMLEUANG OF SPECULATION AND ALSO ASK THAT THE STATUTES OF THE MINISTRY BE CHANGED SO AS TO BRING THEM INTO CONFORMITY WITH THE JOINT POLITICAL COUNCIL'S 18-POINT PROGRAM. THEY HAVE SAID THEY WILL GO ON STRIKE SUNDAY, SEPT. 1 IF THEIR DEMANDS ARE NOT MET.

3. COMMUNIQUE: THE GOVERNMENT ISSUED A COMMUNIQUE ON AUGUST 29 STATING THAT IT BELIEVES SATISFACTION SHOULD BE GIVEN TO THOSE WHOSE GRIEVANCES ARE WELL-FOUNDED, BUT WARNS AGAINST DISTURBING PUBLIC ORDER OR CREATING A BAD SOCIAL CLIMATE. THE CABINET IS ALSO SETTING UP AN AD HOC COMMITTEE TO TRY TO DEAL WITH THE LABOR UNREST.

4. COMMENT: WE CONTINUE TO FOLLOW THE LABOR SITUATION CLOSELY, BUT ARE UNABLE AT THIS TIME TO PREDICT WHETHER THE PRESENT WAVE OF STRIKES IS LIKELY TO BECOME A PERMANENT PART OF THE ECONOMIC/POLITICAL SCENE HERE. THE PATHET LAO'S ROLE, AS WE ARE AWARE OF IT, APPEARS SOMEWHAT CONTRADICTORY. ON THE GOVERNMENT LEVEL PL REPRESENTATIVE SUCH AS PHOUMI VONGVICHITH AND SOTH PHETRASI HAVE SPOKEN OUT AGAINST STRIKES AND APPEAR TO BE GENUINELY AGAINST LABOR UNREST. ON THE CLANDESTINE LEVEL THE PL APPEAR TO BE ENCOURAGING THOSE WHO BELIEVE THEY HAVE GRIEVANCES. THEIR FRIENDS ARE ACTIVE IN THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT AND THEIR RADIO HAS SUPPORTED THE STRIKERS DEMANDS. FINALLY A MENTION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 18-POINT PROGRAM HAS BEEN A PART OF ALMOST EVERY MANIFESTATION.

WHITEHOUSE

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